

DO NON-WORK PRACTICES IN MNCs OPERATING IN INDIA IMPACT ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT?

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Abstract. *The present paper establishes the concept of Non-work Practices and explores its impact on organizational commitment. Drawing upon research conducted in four multinational corporations operating in India, the paper examines the degree to which non-work practices are accepted by Indian employees and their relationship with organizational commitment. Concurrent mixed methodology was adopted in which both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Template analysis was carried out to interpret employees' feelings and experiences, and to identify the emerging trends. Factor analysis was carried out to find factors of non-work practices, and regression analysis was carried out to study relationship between organizational commitment and non-work practices. The article discusses the findings related to non-work practices: how these practices are experienced and perceived by Indian employees and what is their impact on the commitment of employees, which would in turn affect the effectiveness of the organization.*

It was found that since most of the non-work practices were transplanted from the parent company, they were perceived as alien (except in the Anglo-American MNC). Host country employees showed little enthusiasm in carrying out those practices and hence these had no positive impact on their organizational commitment.

Key words: *India, multinational companies, non-work practices, organizational commitment.*

1. Introduction

Many researchers have pointed out that due to the increasingly important role of Multinational corporations (MNCs) in the global economy (Porter, 1986; Prahalad & Doz, 1987; Rosenzweig & Singh, 1991) they are of particular importance to international comparative management research (Fenton-O'Creevy & Gooderham, 2003).

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The success of MNCs is attributed to the effectiveness of human resource management (HRM) (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1994, 1995; Pucik, 1992). For the purpose of synergy and efficiency MNCs engage in cross-unit transfer of business practices that reflect core competencies and superior knowledge and they believe it to be a source of competitive advantage (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1997). Hence, companies from the developed countries that have invested heavily in developing countries seek to transplant their time-tested HRM practices into their operations in developing countries (Beechler & Yang, 1994; Dowling & Welch, 2004; Hannon et al., 1995; Hetrick, 2002; Myloni et al., 2004; Tayeb, 1998).

Kostova & Roth (2002) examined the adoption of an organizational practice by subsidiaries of a MNC. They defined an organizational practice as an organization's routine use of knowledge for conducting a particular function that has evolved over time under the influence of the organization's history, people, interests, and actions. These are expected to achieve the desirable results of more advanced management practices. Organizational practices like structure, management style and HR practices are the formal dimensions which determine organizational processes, i.e., what happens between people in terms of perceived authority and power, information, knowledge, and nature of reward at work. We introduce here a term "Non-work Practices (NWP)" as a branch of HRM practices. We define these as *non-task routine activities initiated by the organization that are not used to produce and deliver products and services. These comprise the activities that would facilitate interaction among employees at all levels, such as how to address each other, involvement in social events, recreational activities, etc.* But NWPs should not be taken as rituals. Rituals are collective activities that are technically superfluous but, within a particular culture, socially essential (Hofstede et al., 1990). In organizations rituals include not only celebrations but also many formal activities defended on apparently rational grounds: meetings, the writing of memos, and planning systems, plus the informal ways in which formal activities are performed: who can afford to be late for what meeting, who speaks to whom, and so on. NWPs appear to be close to rituals in terms of celebrations, while different as they do not include evolved culture of who can afford to be late for the meeting or who speaks to whom, way of greeting and so on. Moreover, rituals are initiated by members of the organization. For instance, employees take initiatives to celebrate birthdays in organizations. However, NWPs look at the activities which are initiated by the organization. This paper makes an initial contribution to the concept of NWPs. It further explores associated organizational commitment outcomes.

Research on transnational contexts by Kostova (1999) has shown that the transfer of best practices within organizations does not occur easily. Schneider (1988) found that Germans, in contrast to French, received Management by Objective more favorably. Likewise in Indian context MBO is not found an effective practice to decide targets between seniors and juniors. Myloni et al. (2004) argued that the practices that do not fit well with Greek culture or are in contrast to employee regulations showed a low level of transfer in Greek firms. Hence, many organizational practices and management

training programmes which are based on the practices having roots in their parent countries largely disregard the differences in socio-cultural constraints, local conditions and circumstances of the host country (Sinha & Kao, 1988).

Researchers have shown that there are various barriers to the success of transfer – some relating to the characteristics of the practices being transferred and others of the cultural and organizational nature (Ghoshal & Bartlett, 1988; Szulanski, 1996; Zander & Kogut, 1995). Kostova (1999) proposed that the success of transnational transfer of organizational practices is mediated by the congruence between the social, organizational and relational contexts. He conceptualized the social context in terms of the institutional distance between the countries of the parent company and of the recipient unit; the organizational context in terms of the organizational culture of the recipient unit; and the relational context in terms of the past relationships between the parent company and the recipient unit, as perceived by the members of the transfer coalition at the recipient unit. Kovach (1994, 1995) also emphasized the difficulties inherent in transferring practices to different subsidiary worldwide due to the perceptual differences among executives of different nationality. However, no attention has been paid to the exploration of the impact of transfer of NWP. The current paper is an attempt to fill this literature gap. This paper further tries to study the impact of NWP on Organizational Commitment (OC) (Gupta, 1990).

Since NWP have the objective of facilitating interactions and relations among employees at all levels, they can be viewed as social capital (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Starkey & Tempest, 2004). Burke & Cooper (2006) argue that there is a clear connection between social capital and effectiveness of HRM practices. Truss & Gill (2009) also argued that, where HR departments exhibit high levels of social capital with a rich network of relationships, both formal and informal, there they will also be perceived to be more effective by organizational actors (Snell, 1999).

The research acknowledges NWP prevalent in Indian MNCs, raises questions regarding their relevance in Indian context and then calls for aligning them with grass root realities of Indian societal culture. Since no attention has been paid to the exploration of the impact of transfer of NWP, this paper makes an initial contribution to the concept of NWP and thereby attempts to fill this literature gap. It further explores the impact of NWP on Organizational Commitment (OC) (Gupta, 1990). Our findings contribute to the body of evidence which highlights the continued significance of the national context and supports the arguments for a more refined and complex approach to the study of national culture.

2. Literature Review

The face of the workplace has changed dramatically in the 21st century. The ever-changing technology, increased competition and globalization have created a new workplace that bears little resemblance to the businesses of the past. In the workplace of the future, many employers are realizing that the only constant advantage that they will have is their people and their commitment towards their organization.

There is a considerable body of literature relating to the concept of OC (Coyle-Shapiro et al., 2006; Gottschalg & Zollo, 2007; Jaramillo et al., 2004; Luchak et al., 2007; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Steyrer et al., 2008; Vandenberghe et al., 2004). Pareek (2004) defines OC as a person's feeling with regard to continuing his or her association with the organization, acceptance of the values and goals of the organization, and willingness to help the organization achieve such goals and values. In other words, this commitment is an attitude about employee's loyalty to their organization and an ongoing process through which organizational participants express their concern for the organization, its continued success and well-being. OC focuses on motivational acts in order to stimulate people to invest their talents in the work that needs to be done. It is reasonable to consider a network of relationships (that provides information on what is happening in the organization, access to power structures, emotional support and friendship) as one of these motivational acts as this would increase the person's involvement in the affairs of the organization and attachment to the organization, and hence, OC. Cohen & Prusak (2001) state that the growth of variables like trust, mutual understanding and OC is represented by **social capital**. Social capital is thus the imperative means to promote OC (Kostova & Roth, 2003). Accordingly, an organization with abundant social capital is more likely to have committed employees. The following section elaborates the concept of social capital.

2.1. Social Capital

The social capital construct has become increasingly important as a useful explanation for various socio-economic activities in an organization. With the growing importance of networks in the business world, the issue of how social capital, often conceptualized as "a set of social resources that are embedded in social organizations such as network ties, norms, and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit", contributes to firm performance has attracted increasing scholarly attention in recent years (Arregle et al., 2007; Burt, 2007; Cohen & Prusak, 2001; Coleman, 1990; Leana & Pil, 2006; Mauer & Ebers, 2006; Moran, 2005; Putnam, 1995, 2000). The organizational social capital reflects the character of social relations within the firm (Leana & Van Buren, 1999). It is an attribute of the collective rather than the sum of the individual's connections (Adler & Kwon, 2002; Edelman et al., 2004).

According to several authors (e.g., Pennings & Lee, 1999), social capital is a potential source of competitive advantage. It has a positive and significant impact on performance (Pastoriza et al., 2008). Organizations characterized by high levels of internal social capital should over perform rivals with lower levels of social capital, because this is a resource that leads a more flexible work organization (Gargiulo & Benassi, 2000), higher pace of innovation (Tsai & Ghoshal, 1998), and reduction of transaction costs (Fukuyama, 1995). Akdere & Robert (2008) examined the economic aspects of social capital and its implications in regard to organizational performance. They considered social capital at individual, group, and organizational

levels of interactions in order to show that it performs an important role in improving performance at all levels.

Social capital is an umbrella concept, where relationship between individuals or social networks is considered crucial and it seems to facilitate organization's relationship with other stakeholders (Akdere & Roberts, 2008; Cheung & Chan, 2008; Das & Teng, 2000; Eisenhardt & Schoonhoven, 1996). The current paper attempts to study the activities that organizations undertake to facilitate interaction between employees outside their work domain (NWP) which form a part of social capital (as argued in the Introduction section). We searched the EMERALD and EBSCO journal sites for any prior study in this context but the search did not yield any results. Although Simon et al. (2004) used the term "non-work" to describe all aspects of an individual's life outside their paid occupation, there was no mention of the practices that we are considering in our study. As there was no literature available on this subject we have described it on the basis of our observation in the following section.

2.2. Non-work Practices

With the increase in amount of work at workplace, employees are expected to spend more time at workplace. With many job opportunities given to the executives, in efforts to retain their employees, present day organizations are introducing many informal activities, i.e., NWPs, to make organizations less stressful and more hospitable places to work. This includes interaction among colleagues, bosses and subordinates besides work, on occasions such as recreational activities, festivals, social occasions like marriages, etc. *These comprise those activities that are expected to be performed by all, by virtue of them being the members of the same organization (e.g., ways of addressing each other, involvement in social events, recreational activities). NWPs are non-task routine activities. NWPs are defined as the processes that are not used to produce and deliver products and services. They bear no direct relation to producing and delivering services or products. These are performed either individually (such as clean your desk) or in a group (picnics or get-together).*

2.2.1 NWPs and Informal Relations at Work

The importance of such NWPs lies in the possibility that these are likely to facilitate cordial relationships between employees, and thereby have a significant impact on interactions at work. These are viewed **as means to coordinate and integrate all organizational units**. According to Lengnick-Hall & Lengnick-Hall (2002), relationships were the foundation of organizational capabilities that were an important source of sustained competitive advantage. They discussed the significant role of the HR department in managing relationships at work, in terms of initiating activities. According to Lin (2001), a set of relationships at the collective or individual level could (or could not) make that collective or individual more productive.

The relationship between group interaction and performance has been the subject of considerable previous research in which structure has largely been viewed in terms

of formal relationships rather than informal interaction patterns (Guzzo & Shea, 1992). Baldwin et al. (1997) found that team interaction patterns in cohesive work groups were positively related to their final grades. They found that centrality in friendship network was related to team-based learning satisfaction. Friendship usually serves a psychological function of companionship. Centrality in friendship might give an individual a better chance of gaining access to information and knowledge, though he/she might not take advantage of it or be aware of it. Granovetter (1985) and Sparrowe, et al. (2001) have also talked about individuals in social networks at work place. Sparrowe et al. (2001) discussed the significant role of relationships at work, including structural formal relationships and informal relationships.

Kanter's (1977) book titled 'Men and Women of the Corporation' provides a description of the informal structure that existed in the shadows of the more obvious formal structure in corporations. Sociologists have pointed out that informal networks are an important social resource as they have an influence on the flow of information, power, and status in work organizations (Campbell et al., 1986; Lin et al., 1981). For instance, informal networks help workers to obtain jobs, to advance up the corporate ladder, to gain skills, and to acquire legitimacy (Bridges & Villemez, 1986; Campbell & Rosenfeld, 1985; Grieco, 1996; Podolny & Baron, 1997).

2.2.2. NWP and OC

Recent studies (Hofstede, 2001; House et al., 2004) have found a relationship between culture, human nature and human behavior and have shown national culture as a major reason for variability in organizational practices. Janssens et al. (1995) argued that organizational practices are socially embedded and that they reflect the socio-cultural environments in which they have evolved. Like most organizational practices, NWPs are also based on cultural beliefs that reflect the basic assumptions and values of the national culture of the parent firm. To achieve OC and synchronization, organizations often engage in cross-border transfers of NWPs. Now the question raised is what happens when MNCs transfer their practices overseas, especially in countries like India where assumptions that underlie such practices do not fit with the cultures of the recipients. There are ample studies which highlight relationship between OC and culture (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Lok & Crawford, 2001; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Silverthorne, 2004; Yiing & Ahmad, 2009). From cultural perspective (Hofstede, 1985; Schneider, 1988) it is inappropriate to take management practices and theories from the culture in which they were developed and apply them to other cultures (see, e.g., Bass & Burger 1979; Hofstede, 1985). An individual of a different culture may see these kinds of practices as unfair and illogical, and then the application of these practices may lead to unexpected consequences that hinder a subsidiary's performance (Ervasti & Suutari, 2004). From the cultural perspective, the fit between the organizational practices and the local culture is stressed and from this point of view it is argued that extensive global standardization of HRM-practices will not be an easy task (Ervasti & Suutari, 2004). This failure can lead to negative consequences for OC and hence for a

subsidiary's performance. Employees must feel a sense of belonging to the organization and they must have confidence in their employers if they are to remain committed to the organization. Hence we argue that NWP is a liability when they are not acceptable by those who determine the organization's effectiveness. There are a number of studies that suggest that there are various barriers to the transfer of the practices that are of cultural nature (Kedia & Bhagat, 1988; Zander & Kogut, 1995) but the impact of transfer of NWP has been a purely neglected area of research. There seems to be no study carried out on NWP. Hence it is an important dimension from the social relationship point of view, and is therefore considered in the present study.

3. Research Objective

The aim of the study is to examine the relationship between NWP and OC by understanding the evaluative perceptions of Indian executives regarding the transplanted NWP. It concentrates on the 'soft issues' involved in the association of individuals belonging to different socio-cultural backgrounds. The objectives of the study are:

- to identify factors of non-work practices
- to identify the relationship between NWP and current level of OC

The authors selected the United Kingdom, Sweden, Korea and Japan MNCs for the obvious reason that over the last ten years they have become major overseas investors in India and also represent socio-culturally diverse global realities.

4. Context of Research

This article focuses on the transfer of NWP from various MNCs to Indian subsidiaries. Most MNCs are able to run their business processes very well in their own country, but often they find that the same processes perform unsatisfactorily in their overseas subsidiaries. This is mostly a result of replicating the organizational processes and practices in different countries without full appreciation of the fact that they have to be organized and managed differently in a foreign land (Myloni et al., 2004).

Brief Profiles of MNCs Chosen for the Study

Anglo-American MNC

SI-International (pseudonym) is an Anglo-American multinational corporation (MNC) in which the British partners are the major shareholders.

Swedish MNC

AL-India is a subsidiary of AL-International (pseudonym), a Swedish MNC. AL-India came into being in 1995, with the acquisition of equity in three leading consumer goods companies in India.

Korean MNC

PC-India (pseudonym) is a 100 per cent subsidiary of PC-International which is a Korean MNC. In a short span of three to four years PC-India's financial performance has increased manifold.

Japanese MNC

BW-India (pseudonym) is a 50:50 Indo-Japanese venture. However, control over matters like quality lies almost totally in Japanese hands and the parent company is seen to be the Japanese one.

5. Research Methodology

Mixed methodology was adopted in which both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. The final inferences are based on both data analysis results (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

Mixed methods research is increasingly being used in place of traditional methods of implementing data in human behavioral sciences (Brewer & Hunter, 2006; Creswell, 1994; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Greene et al., 1989; Howe, 1988; Reichardt & Rallis, 1994; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, 2003). Recent mixed methods research practices have proposed various mixed methods design alternatives that allow researchers to link the purpose of the research to methodologies and integrate findings from mixed methods (see Caracelli & Greene, 1997; Creswell, 1994; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Greene et al., 1989; Maxwell & Loomis, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, 2003; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2006). Teddlie & Tashakkori (2006) provide a comprehensive mixed methods research design framework using the methods–strands matrix and discuss four families of mixed methods designs: concurrent, sequential, conversion, and fully integrated. The current paper adopts concurrent mixed methodology approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the dynamics associated with employee's perceptions of NWP. In concurrent designs, qualitative and quantitative strands are implemented independently throughout data collection and analysis. An advantage of this design is that researchers can verify and generate theories by utilizing both qualitative and quantitative strands (Jang et al., 2008). Results from both strands are synthesized to make inferences about the inquiry problem. Teddlie & Tashakkori's (2006) conversion and fully integrated designs both feature a multistrand concurrent design where mixing occurs throughout all stages.

6. Data Collection Procedures

The data was collected during 2002–2006. The dimensions of qualitative data and quantitative data were different as questionnaire was based on expert opinions, whereas qualitative data was conducted concurrently on those NWP which were seen to be

significant and about which interviewees had something to say. Qualitative categories were developed based on observations and interviewees' responses.

6.1. Qualitative Data

This study is a descriptive evaluative perception of the 'lived' experiences of Indian executives. These perceptions are constructed as a result of interpersonal interaction (and observations) between executives. As a result, this study describes how pattern of interactions due to NWP influence employees' commitment towards the organization. Based on qualitative phase, seven NWPs were included in the study (Table 1). 243 employees across the levels, from senior to workers, were interviewed for this study. Stratified sampling was followed to select the sample. The research team conducted interviews with employees to understand employee perceptions regarding their association with the NWPs. The interviews were semi-structured and efforts were made to understand the reactions of employees to various NWPs. The interviews probed issues such as, "What was the reaction and behavior of employees towards morning exercises or cleaning their desk?", "Were they comfortable or happy doing those activities or was it like a forced or a compulsive activity for them?" Data was collected till theoretical saturation was achieved (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

6.2. Quantitative Data

Since NWPs is a new domain, no established questionnaire was available to collect data. For the current study ten items using a five-point Likert scale that measures degree of agreement with NWPs was developed. Items from Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Mowday, Steers, & Porter (1979) were used for measuring OC. Based on experts' opinions, five items from the original instruments were selected for the current study. The experts were professors of organizational behaviour from leading management institutes in India. The data was collected from 384 executives working in four MNCs operating in India.

7. Analysis

7.1 Qualitative Data – Trend analysis

Data was qualitatively analyzed with template analysis being carried out on collected data. This is a widely used approach in qualitative research, although it is often referred to as codebook analysis or thematic coding. When researchers look for the themes in the text they follow template analysis. King (1994) uses the term template analysis following Crabtree & Miller (1992).

The essence of the approach is that the researcher produces a list of codes (a template) representing themes identified in their textual data. Some of these are usually identified a priori, but are modified and added to as the researcher reads and interprets the texts.

The data was analyzed to arrive at various categories and found certain NWP's common to MNCs and a few were found unique to the individual case. These are aimed at capturing shared codes and language and shared narratives about the non-work practices. The data is discussed on seven dimensions (Table 1).

TABLE 1

Sl. No.	Non-work Practices
1.	Morning exercises
2.	Calling on the first name basis
3.	Dress code
4.	Clean-your-desk policy
5.	Tea/Coffee self-service
6.	Birthday celebrations
7.	Get-togethers and Picnics

7.2. Quantitative Data – Factor Analysis

To understand the constructs of NWP's, the study uses factor analysis. The factor analysis results are based on principal factoring with iterations and oblique rotations using Statistical Package for Social Science version 16 (SPSS) statistical analysis package program. The factors were then tested using factor analysis. With regard to the factors that are important to executives working in MNCs, a total of ten items were subjected to factor analysis (Table 2).

TABLE 2

Sl. No.	Non-work Practices
1.	Managers visit each other socially.
2.	Superiors visit subordinates during marriages, festivals, etc., in their subordinates' family.
3.	Superiors and subordinates participate jointly in recreational activities.
4.	Managers do not take morning exercise seriously.
5.	Superiors respond warmly to their subordinates' greetings.
6.	Festivals are celebrated in the organization.
7.	Picnics are organized by the organization.
8.	Employees' birthdays are celebrated with enthusiasm.
9.	The organization extends help to employees on occasions such as marriage, death, etc.
10.	The company invites employees' families on special occasions.

In this study, factor analysis was used to reduce a large number of variables into a manageable number of factors. The measurement instrument was tested for reliability. The reliability or internal consistency was measured using Chronbach's alpha. The higher the Cronbach alpha value, the greater the internal consistency of the measure. In this case it was found to be 0.8642, which is acceptable for further analysis. Since we wanted to explore whether this measure has some inherent structure in it and to explore a possible structure, we carried out factor analysis. Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test of sampling adequacy was initially performed on the data and its value of 0.866 (Table 3) confirmed the appropriateness of conducting factor analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).

TABLE 3

Sampling adequacy. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.866
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1516.100
	df	45
	Sig.	0.000

Cronbach's alpa = 0.8642

Once the sampling adequacy was confirmed, Principal Component Analysis was performed on the variables by specifying the rotation. Components were conserved if eigen values were > 1.0 and the level of variance accounted for by each component was recorded. The rationale for the eigen value is that any individual factor should account for the variance of at least a single variable if it is to be retained for interpretation. Each variable contributes a value of 1 to the total eigen value. The total variables that can be explained with the above factors are more than 66%. Outcomes of factor analyses are evident in Table 4 (4A; 4B) that shows extraction of three factors which are considered to be important for Indian executives.

TABLE 4

4A Rotated Component Matrix

	Component		
	1	2	3
non-work practices	-7.849E-6	.819	.261
nw02	.270	.233	.735
nw03	.177	.202	.769
nw04	.284	.203	.779
nw05	.170	.729	.081
nw06	.746	.151	.277
nw07	.245	.716	.274
nw08	.587	.532	.307
nw09	.682	.213	.149
nw10	.825	.016	.213

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

4B Component Transformation Matrix

Component	1	2	3
1	.593	.554	.585
2	-.660	.750	-.042
3	.462	.361	-.810

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

It indicates that there is a sufficient inter-correlation among variables. The three factors (Table 4) are as follows:

1. **Personal celebrations (Factor 1)** contained items pertaining to employees' birthday celebrations, festivals and involving employees' families for celebrations

and organizational efforts to help employees on personal occasions such as marriages, etc. (Items No. 6, 8, 9, 10). Item loadings on the matrix ranged from 0.587 to 0.825. The common nature of these items identified them as 'Personal celebrations'.

2. **Organizational involvement (Factor 2)** consisted of items with efforts on the part of the organization to encourage interaction between juniors and seniors besides work such as organizing picnics (Items No. 1, 5, 7). Loadings ranged from 0.735 to 0.779.
3. **Superior connect (Factor 3)** consisted of items pertaining to involvement of superior with juniors, such as superiors' participation with junior in recreational activities, or visiting subordinates during marriage or festival, etc., in their subordinates' family (Items No. 2, 3, 4). Item loading on the matrix for this factor ranged from 0.716 to 0.819.

8. Results and Discussion

This study concerns the perception of the host country employees of NWP by MNCs to their overseas subsidiaries. Using data collected from MNC subsidiaries located in India, we examine the degree to which these practices affect OC of the host country employees. Our empirical findings indicate that subsidiaries have implemented the NWPs but they are not accepted on an overall basis. Specifically, practices that do not fit well with Indian culture or are in contrast to employee regulations show a low level of acceptance.

Moreover, our interviews revealed that significant cultural changes are underway leaving more room to maneuver for MNCs. In the following sections we are going to discuss the results of qualitative and quantitative analyses.

8.1. Qualitative Analysis – Lived Experiences of Indian Executives

8.1.1 Morning Exercises

There was no morning exercise regimen at the Western MNCs. At the Korean MNC, however, everybody (from operator to MD) exercised for 15 minutes at their respective workstations. It was a must! Workers at the plant at the Japanese MNC did morning prayers and exercise. No such initiatives were taken at head office. Many employees did not participate properly. Lack of interest was also visible among the employees of the Korean MNC. In sum, Indians did not like doing morning exercises. The current study reaffirms Bae's (2004) findings in an Indian context who found through interviews that Thai employees working in a Korean MNC did not feel enthusiastic about morning exercises.

8.1.2. Calling on a First Name Basis

No such practice existed in the Korean and Japanese MNCs, whereas at the Anglo-American MNC, the MD was addressed by his first name because he was an expatriate

and had insisted upon it. Most colleagues and subordinates were, as expected, addressed by their first names. Some seniors were also addressed by their first names but only by their immediate subordinates.

In the Swedish MNC the practice of addressing each other by the first name achieved only a limited success. The top managers addressed each other by the first names, but 'Sir' was used in most cases, particularly where age differences were greater and the seniors were two or more levels superior. At all the Regional Sales Offices and plants, seniors were routinely called "Sir".

We can say that this practice was not in any way affecting employees' perception of their organization or seniors.

8.1.3. Dress Code

A uniform dress code was the norm in the Korean and Japanese MNCs, but the Korean MNC was stricter in following this practice. Everybody from the MD to the workers wore the same uniform which bore the company logo. At the Japanese MNC all employees from the level of operators to MD and CEO were supposed to wear a uniform with the company logo, but the MD and CEO, who kept a spare set of uniforms at the plant, were normally seen out of uniform. There was no dress code at the Head Office.

Executives at the Head Office and Sales offices at the Anglo-American and Swedish MNCs were expected to wear a tie. However, this practice was not imposed upon the executives. In both the Western MNCs permanent workers were given uniforms. However, they were not punished when they did not wear it but were reminded not to continue to do so.

Again, wearing uniforms was not found to affect Indian employees' OC but making them feel confined. This is similar to the case of Mexican respondents who felt that such rituals intruded upon their individuality (Yongsun & Sohn, 1998).

8.1.4. Clean-your-desk Policy

This practice was followed only in the Korean MNC and not in the other three. All employees except the MD cleaned their own workstation at the Korean MNC. When this practice was introduced, nobody liked it but they followed it under compulsion. Managers were often seen cleaning their tables and afterwards throwing duster into the dustbin, as if getting rid of something very distasteful. But they had no choice. This practice was also not helpful in creating OC among employees.

8.1.5. Tea/Coffee Self-service

At the Anglo-American, Swedish and Korean MNCs everybody was expected to serve tea/coffee by him/herself and wash their cups. At the Anglo-American MNC's Research Office and the plant, peons served tea/coffee. Most employees including directors were observed serving tea/coffee themselves, without any apparent antagonism towards the practice. At the Swedish MNC peons served tea/coffee frequently. In both Western

MNCs most executives drank coffee/tea at their workstation, they liked it that way. Peons served tea/coffee at the Japanese MNC, too. At the Korean MNC workers went for tea to the canteen in batches and in a queue. The scenario looked like a school set up. It was observed that only this section had negative feelings for this practice while other employees were neutral regarding this practice. This practice didn't seem to affect OC, either.

8.1.6. Birthday Celebrations

This practice was followed in three MNCs—the Anglo-American, Swedish and Korean. The Japanese MNC had no streamlined system for birthday celebrations. Birthdays at the Anglo-American MNC were celebrated at 5 p.m., and the company paid for the cake. No such celebration took place for workers. At the Swedish MNC, a bouquet and a card were given on birthdays to everybody but the workers who were only given a card. The Korean MNC also celebrated with a cake at around 5.00 p.m. but the celebration was limited to departmental members. According to many in all the three cases under study, it was a ritual that hardly enthused employees.

8.1.7. Get-togethers and the Annual Picnic

No significant differences were noted among the four cases. It was an annual activity. Among the four, the event was better managed in the Anglo-American case, where a cricket match was sometimes organized between the head office and the plant for the employees. It was also found that some local festivals like *lohri* and *baisakhi* are also celebrated. The atmosphere at the get-together was perceived as being very friendly and casual. According to one respondent, "Seniors are casual at such parties and don't discuss business". Most respondents revealed that managers visit each other socially. However, this interaction was restricted to people of the same level.

Picnics rarely took place at the Swedish MNC, though sometimes a cricket match was organized. Among the Eastern MNCs, an annual get-together has been held on New Year's Eve at the Japanese MNC for the last five to six years. At the Korean MNC, too, it was an annual event. However, Korean families rarely participated in such a get-together.

8.2. Quantitative Analysis – Regression Analysis

To address the research objectives in this study, the researcher used multiple regression analysis. This statistical procedure allowed a test of the relationship among the predictor variable (NWP) and the dependent variable (OC). Three factors identified through factor analysis were taken as independent variable. Standardized beta is usually done to answer the question of which dimensions of the independent variable has a greater effect on the dependent variable in a multiple regression analysis. A high value of R^2 suggests that the regression model explains the variation in the dependent variable. Higher R square is better, it should be more than 0.50 at least. However, p value of

ANOVA (greater than .05) indicates the model is fit. In this study R^2 is lower than .05 and p value is greater than .05 in the case of two dimensions of OC. Hence generalization of this relationship needs further validation.

Items measuring OC are taken from Organizational Commitment Questionnaire developed by Mowday, Steers, & Porter (1979), viz.:

1. You advice your friends to join this organization. (**Identification**)
2. You feel proud to tell your friends to join this organization. (**Identification**)
3. Employees care for their factory just like their family. (**Involvement**)
4. You are willing to do anything so that this organization remains at the top in the market. (**Loyalty**)
5. There are many managers looking for better prospects elsewhere. (**Loyalty**)

The results (Table 5) indicated that two out of three dimensions of non-work practices were positively and significantly related to OC. Overall, personal celebrations seem to have the greatest impact on OC.

TABLE 5

On Identification	Standardized beta
Personal Celebration	0.222
Organization Involvement	0.305
Superior Connect	0.209
R- Square	0.200

Level of confidence: 0.000

On Loyalty	Standardized beta
Personal Celebration	-0.214
Organization Involvement	-0.324
Superior Connect	-0.289
R-Square	0.237

Level of confidence: 0.000

On Involvement	Standardized beta
Personal Celebration	0.116
Organization Involvement	0.013
Superior Connect	0.083
R-Square	0.013

Level of confidence: 0.048

On Identification, out of the three non-work practices factors, Organization Involvement influences the most (Beta=0.305), followed by Personal Celebrations and Superior Connect. However, overall R square is low (0.200).

On Involvement, out of the three non-work practices factors, Personal Celebrations influences the most (Beta=0.116), followed by Superior Connect. Beta value of Organization Involvement (0.013) is less than 0.6 and hence it is not considered to influence Involvement significantly.

On Loyalty, all the NWP dimensions have a negative influence and overall R square is 0.237. Hence, there is no relationship between loyalty and NWPs. Since p value is marginally lower than .50, generalization of this relationship needs further studies.

8.3. Triangulation – Impact of NWPs on OC

Triangulation of qualitative and quantitative methodology has the potential to complement each other and enrich the understanding of the phenomenon under study (Kopinak, 1999). In our study, qualitative and quantitative data looked at somewhat different Non-work Practices. Only *Birthday Celebrations (Personal Celebrations)*, and *Get-togethers and the Annual Picnic (Organizational Involvement)* were common to both sets of data. The remaining five qualitative NWPs and one quantitative dimension were different. The results gained from the common themes of both the analyses assert that NWPs have no significant impact on OC of Indian employees. The same is supported by the unique dimensions of qualitative and quantitative data. Both sets of data affirm that employee perceptions for NWPs were clearly negative for Korean MNC (Table 6a and 6b). In the case of Swedish and Japanese MNCs, employee perceptions varied from negative to neutral. Only in the case of Anglo-American MNC, employee perceptions for some NWPs were found to be positive. These positive ratings could be attributed to the fact that this MNC has adopted some local practices such as celebration of local festivals like *lohari* and *baisakhi*.

TABLE 6A. Existence of NWP

Sl. No.	NWP	Existence of NWP			
		ANGLO-AMERICAN MNC	SWEDISH MNC	KOREAN MNC	JAPANESE MNC
1	Morning Exercises	No	No	Yes	Yes
2	Calling On First Name Basis	Yes	Yes	No	No
3	Dress Code	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4	Clean-Your-Desk Policy	No	No	Yes	No
5	Tea/Coffee Self-Service	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
6	Birthday Celebrations	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
7	Get-togethers and Annual Picnics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

TABLE 6B. Employee Perceptions

Sl. No.	NWP	Employee Perceptions			
		ANGLO-AMERICAN MNC	SWEDISH MNC	KOREAN MNC	JAPANESE MNC
1	Morning Exercises			Negative	Negative
2	Calling On First Name Basis	Negative	Negative		
3	Dress Code	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
4	Clean-Your-Desk Policy			Negative	
5	Tea/Coffee Self- Service	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	
6	Birthday Celebrations	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	
7	Get-togethers and Annual Picnics	Positive	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

Overall, both the analyses assert that ‘transplanted and imposed’ NWP had no positive impact on OC. It was found that since most NWP were transplanted from the parent company, they were perceived as being mandatory. Employees showed little enthusiasm in carrying out these practices and hence these had no positive impact on OC. It was found that NWP were executed in full or in part by employees to retain employment. This can be attributed to a number of reasons like economic, political, legal, social and cultural differences across borders. Companies operating only within the borders of a nation generally have the luxury of dealing with a relatively limited set of economic, political, legal, social and cultural variables. A company operating multiple units abroad, i.e., a MNC, isn’t blessed with such homogeneity. Culture is a pre-dominant factor in our case as countries differ widely in their cultures. People of different countries adhere differently to the basic values. Cultural differences from country to country necessitate corresponding differences in management practices among a company’s subsidiaries. Studies show how employees’ attitudes, values and behaviors differ across national cultures and how these differences can influence HR policies (Hofstede, 1980; Laurent, 1983; Trompenaars, 1993). The greater the degree of imposition of these practices, the lower the identification with organizational goals and higher the employee turnover rate.

Based on indigenous theories and Indian culture it is derived that NWP which were not aligned with Indian culture were not very accepted and internalized by Indian employees. Indian society is hierarchical and has high power distance (Hofstede, 1980; Schwartz, 1999; Trompenaars, 1993), therefore practices like calling seniors on the first name basis, serving tea or coffee for themselves, cleaning own desk policy, and the same dress code for everybody were not appreciated by Indian employees. Similarly, birthday celebration is perceived as a private affair, and Indian employees felt uncomfortable and less enthused with this practice as well. The underlying purpose of the NWP was to create social capital, feeling of we-ness, however, practices perceived culturally unfit could not develop social capital. Application of Western models in Indian context needs to be done with caution because these are based on the research designed by westerners

with their implicit cultural worldviews (Awasthy & Gupta, 2009). As a matter of fact, India is a unique culture (Ronen & Shenkar 1985; Sinha 1990; Ervasti & Suutari, 2004; Awasthy & Gupta 2009), which brings out the need of emic studies to develop a more holistic understanding of intercultural contexts in the field of management. It also reinforces the need to adapt NWP to the differences among countries for HR management in MNCs.

Kostova (1999) defines organizational practices as particular ways of conducting organizational functions that have evolved over time under the influence of an organization's history, people, interests, and actions, and that have become institutionalized in the organization and have conceptualized only the formal organizational practices. However, our study has looked into practices other than the formal practices, i.e., Non-work Practices, and found that NWP can have a negative impact on OC. Hereby we expand the notion of organizational practices to NWP and hence suggest that whenever organizational practices at workplace are to be studied, NWP should be included.

9. Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to investigate how NWP impact the OC of Indian employees working in MNC subsidiaries located in India. The results indicate that transplanted and imposed NWP had no positive impact on OC. This research initiative was first to investigate NWP. The findings infer that the employees follow these practices as a forced ritual. The analyses revealed that employees follow these practices under obligation and not because they want to. A myriad of various undercurrents like national culture, society, economy, etc., could be attributed to our findings and observed OC levels. These commitment levels indicate a workforce that would leave the company at the drop of a hat, if the opportunity presents itself. According to Branham (2005) and Wildermuth & Pauken (2008), creating an environment in which employees are truly engaged in their work and by their companies is imperative today. MNCs that moderate their practices according to employees are more likely to see an improvement in OC. Moreover, stronger commitment leads to increased employee retention, increased turnover, and stronger employee morale. To succeed in the face of increasing competition, a business needs improved productivity at all levels. This need requires the enthusiastic commitment of all employees that can only be achieved through better management practices.

10. Significance and Contribution

This study is significant for several reasons. It addresses a question of relevance of the transfer of NWP that has **not been examined previously**. Research findings contribute to a greater understanding of how Indian executives feel about transplanted NWP in MNCs operating in India. By understanding how NWP from cultures alien to each other tend to impact the nature of relationships 'between the employees and employer',

this study contributes to **literature** by advancing our knowledge of OC. It provides specific recommendations for **practicing managers** by examining the performance effects of the institutionalization of the NWP in the subsidiaries. It also provides useful facts to **consultants** to MNCs operating in developing countries whose main concern is mostly the employee-employee and employee-employer relationships.

The study also has significant **theoretical** contribution. It draws from several disciplinary areas – international management, organization theory and organizational behavior to link traditional concepts of OC and organizational performance with NWP.

Finally, this study also gives ideas for **future research**. The study can be generalized and expanded for other organizational practices, other developing countries, determinants of institutional distance, strategies for implementation and institutionalization of NWP, etc.

11. Recommendations

Employees' involvement is a key to OC and organizational effectiveness. When possible, opportunities should be provided for employees at all levels to give input about which types of initiatives with respect to NWP are important to them, and to participate in the efforts. There are multiple advantages of doing this. Employees may come up with really innovative ideas on how to make a positive impact on the community and meet a business need at the same time. Also, investing in the initiatives that are important to employees will increase the commitment they have with their organization. Getting employees involved in this way is consistent with the principles of participative management, and the idea that employees prefer work environments where they can make a contribution to work they find meaningful.

12. Study Limitations

This study has some limitations. First, the scope of the study was limited to the extent of understanding the impact of NWP on OC. There could be other dimensions which would be impacting OC, if so, other organizational practices should be taken into account while examining OC. Second, the sample was collected from four MNCs operating in India. Further studies can cover larger sample size. Third, this study was more exploratory in nature than attempting to establish causality. No prior instrument is available to examine perception about NWP. Another limitation of the study was common method variance. In fact R^2 was quite low. Subsequent studies can establish a priori relationships and test their validity.

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